



# PUNCY

OR  
THE LONDON CHARIVARI



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## Charivaria

A GALLERY writer points out that many M.P.s read their speeches. Thus of course setting their constituents an example.

GOEBBELS broadcast a birthday tribute to HITLER, but so far the FUEHRER has made no reply. Pique, we suppose. What he really wanted was Moscow.

"Where are the penny dreadfuls we used to read forty or fifty years ago?" asks a reviewer. He should know. They are often found disguised as Books of the Month at eight-and-sixpence a copy.

In Holland a new German order decrees that no fiction must have a British setting. But it has been decided that the regulation is not to affect the official communiqués issued from Berlin.



A retired doctor says that in his young days he wrote a shilling shocker. Most doctors nowadays write their shockers in guineas.

Many people who definitely gave up smoking for the duration on Budget Day 1941 have done the same again this year.

Mirrors distributed to French girls had a picture of HITLER on the back. Nevertheless they looked far more often at the other side.

"Never mind if your trousers are baggy. It is patriotic to wear baggy trousers in wartime," says a newspaper—not, curiously enough, in the stop press.

As proof of the quality of dance music, a band-leader says he knows of a certain jazz tune that has been popular for twenty-three years. What is more, he remembers quite a few of its titles during that time, too.

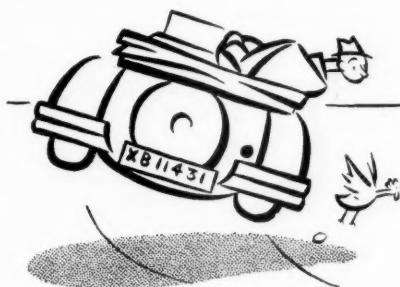
According to Rome Radio, Italian naval forces are searching for British battleships. The Fascist War Council seems to have resolved that its navy must not be sunk entirely by British destroyers.

HITLER is said to dislike spectacles but has to use them when reading newspapers. The FUEHRER is losing his grip. At one time he would have ordered all German newspapers to be printed in larger type.

According to a Swedish newspaper, HITLER has not sought Japanese help against Russia. No doubt deeming the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact sufficient guarantee.

"Lansdown Road (close Camden Crescent). With possession of the lower part of 5 rooms. Remainder let at £60 yearly."—*Advt. in Somerset Paper.*

You'll just have room for your carpets.



"... American troops marching to Buckingham Palace in 1917 and arriving in Northern Ireland this year."

*Weekly Paper's Picture Caption.*  
Footsore but experienced.

LAVAL has a personal bodyguard of eighteen Gestapo officers. It was thought that such a busy man should be protected from the attentions of autograph-collectors.

A motorist who collided with a telegraph post explained that he had swerved to avoid a hen. Nowadays this is considered an adequate excuse as quite possibly the hen was on her way home to lay an egg.

## Thoughts on a Politician

SOME men by virtue of their splendid deeds  
 Belie the drawback of a homely face  
 (There is no need to labour such a case).  
 The warthog as he roots among the reeds  
 May be a kindly father; seeming weeds  
 Have, so they tell me, a medicinal grace;  
 Some men are beautiful; 'tis hard to trace  
 In those fair forms the villainies, the greedies;  
 But not Laval! in him are all compact  
 The outward semblance and the inner slime,  
 The heart of foulness and the front of crime,  
 So that of him it may be truly said  
 Here was in every glance, in every act  
 The toad that had no jewel in his head. EVOE.

• • •

## Fun for the Scots

IT is now permissible for me to reveal that less than ten weeks ago I went to Perth to have my photograph taken. When I light-heartedly joined the A.T.C. a year or so ago I little dreamed that I should be called upon in consequence to sacrifice that old and trusted friend, my first identity card; still less that I should be compelled to affix to the new one a photograph of my head and shoulders in uniform. But my Commanding Officer at length persuaded me to depart on this repulsive errand, taking with me as much of my uniform as my wife had seen fit to pack.

When I arrived I found that some arithmetical oddity of the date compelled me to park my car on the opposite side of the street from the studio, and it so happened that the driver's door opened away from the pavement. Nothing daunted, I locked the car, crossed the street, entered an alley and followed a labyrinthine route to the studio door—then returned to the car, unlocked it and extracted my suitcase, and again threaded my way to the door—deposited the suitcase and once more went back, this time to lock the car—and finally returned to present myself, complete



with suit-case and a quiet mind, in the studio. During these wanderings I remained unperturbed by the interest I seemed to arouse in one or two loafers.

Inside, however, I encountered a team of lady photographers, elegant females to whom no modest man could think of displaying his braces. Clearly the car was my only possible changing room, so I arranged an appointment for half an hour later and took the suit-case back again. I then noticed that my off-side rear tyre was punctured. This of course made it impossible for me to drive to a secluded spot, so I cowered down in the back of the car and there donned my tunic. My wife had not thought it necessary to put in the forage-cap, but this omission really made no difference, for I was quite interesting enough anyway, clad in immaculate tunic and dirty flannel trousers, and as I got out of the car the loafers multiplied visibly. They rather flurried me; perhaps that was why, in the course of the involved procedure of locking the door with a key which I had naturally left inside in my discarded jacket, I somehow came to leave the suit-case standing in the road. I did not discover this oversight until later.

At last, however, I was able to fight my way through the crowd and have my picture taken. It is a grim likeness indeed, but it may yet frighten Hitler.

The reader will no doubt have divined that when I returned to the car for the last time the suit-case was missing. It was in fact in the police-station, but I did not know that until the next day. I now made a heroic decision. It would obviously have been possible for me to drive away on a flat tyre, but I have always understood that the inner tube objects to this procedure—and rubber, I hear, is in short supply. I therefore got out and changed the wheel.

It was admittedly an inept performance. But I had a good house. The nucleus of the crowd drawn up on the opposite pavement was the entire population of Perth, but a large proportion of the inhabitants of the rest of Scotland also arrived, and I am not sure that one or two special trains were not hurried from across the Border. A large force of competent police kept order. Right in the front row stood a grinning major-general, but I remembered my absent cap and refrained from saluting him.

The climax arrived when I removed the jack and so revealed that the spare tyre was as flat as the other. This calamity was greeted by a shriek which must have been heard in the Shetlands, and it utterly demoralized me. I indulged in no more heroics. I jumped into the car, started the engine, slammed the gear-lever—for some reason—into reverse, and drove backwards at full speed into a bus drawn up just behind. The bus shook with laughter. Hurriedly I changed gear and tried to drive forwards. But the rear bumper had become entangled with the radiator of the bus and the car would not move.

A rapid inspection fortunately showed me a way out. I saw that on the side where the flat tyre was situated the bumper had remained low enough to be clear of the bus, so I extracted a chisel from the tool-box and with one deft stroke pierced the undamaged rear tyre, to be rewarded by a gratifying collapse of the near-side of the car. The bumper dropped away from the grip of the bus, and I was free. Restraining with difficulty a strong impulse to cross the road and plunge the chisel into the throat of the general, an operation which I suppose might have had some adverse effect on the war effort, I drove away.

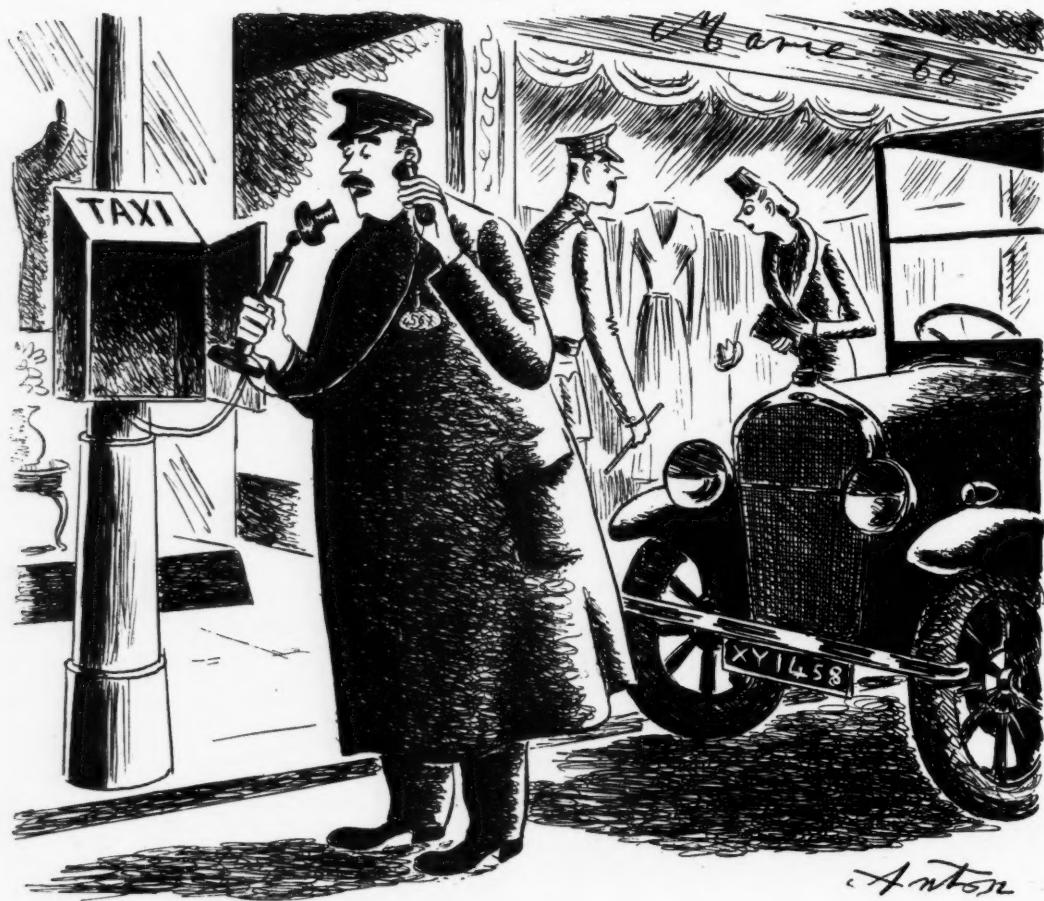
Far away into the country, I knew not whither, there to restore my nerves, to seek balm for my soul, and to begin the long and uphill task of re-establishing relations with my inner tubes—and, as I have since learned, with my aluminium rims.



### THE GLEAM AHEAD

“We have now reached a period in the war when we can see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

Mr. Attlee.



"By all means come round for a cosy little chat—but are you sure you've got the right number?"

### Little Talks

WHY so low? Liver?  
No. I'm perfectly fit.  
Got a hard week before you?  
Well, I was looking forward to some rather good original work. But I've just been reading my favourite Sunday astrologer, and he's taken all the stuffing out of me.

How's that?

It doesn't look like a good week's work at all. Under "Uranus" he says: "Little doing till Thursday." Under "Neptune" he says: "Don't make decisive moves." "Mars" is "Don't make rash moves," and "Venus": "Plan summer activities." The advice to those born under the Moon is "Take life easily: many demands on your energy

to-morrow," and "Saturn" is "Don't try to cope with major problems."

Well, which are you?

I was born under Libra, I believe; but he doesn't mention Libra.

Then you may be all right.

I doubt it. It seems to be a week of universal quiescence and repose. And anyhow, if everybody else is "taking it easy," "avoiding decisions," and not "coping with major problems," how can I expect to get anything done?

What did you want to get done?

Well, for one thing, I was going to the Home Secretary to ask him to prosecute a few of the astrologers. But, for all I know, he was born under Saturn.

You can look him up in Who's Who.

I haven't got a "Who's Who."  
What's the Lucky Colour to-day?  
"To-day's Lucky Colour is Primrose."  
And "Lucky Number is 5."

Well, I should make an appointment for 5.0 P.M., and call in primrose trousers.

What a brain!

But why do you want to prosecute this nonsense?

If this chap was a Fifth Columnist—which I don't suppose he is—can you imagine any better work that he could do than to make half the population believe every week that according to their "horoscopes" they ought to "go slow" and "take life easily"?

If they believed it.

*I'm told a great many poor fish do.*

Well, you should read my man. He's full of confidence and ginger. As far as I can see it's only a matter of days now before we win the war.

*That's just as bad. What does he say?*

He says "Mark off three months from, say, May 3 to an Axis catastrophe."

*Why May 3?*

He doesn't say. He used to say "The Stars Foretell" so-and-so. Now he just says it.

*Well, that's more honest, anyhow. Only it reduces him to the rank of a leader-writer or military expert.*

Without the censorship. Listen to this: "I think I shall prove right when I say that the blow struck soon" (on the European mainland) "will be equivalent to a major victory in its consequences. A series of revolts will have their genesis in this action."

*What does all that mean?*

It might mean anything.

*Does he get it from the stars?*

Doesn't say so.

*Then either he's talking big without any foundation, or he's using confidential information, information which no leader-writer or reporter would be allowed to use.*

Maybe. By the way, I see now that this particular star-chap has given up referring to the stars altogether. Even in his "Birthday Indications." He simply says: "May 21 to June 20—Monday, best for pushing ahead with your plans, particularly business interests. Extravagance or an error of judgment in handling others may cause strain on Tuesday. Better take rest of week quietly."

*What?*

"Better take rest of week quietly."

*That's except for Monday and Tuesday?*

Yes.

*What a war-effort week! And nothing about the stars?*

Not a thing.

*Then the last excuse has gone.*

Still, I must say he cheers me up.

*By telling you that Monday's the only day in the week for pushing ahead? In war-time?*

No. I don't pay any attention to that. I mean the big stuff. Listen: "Coincident with this serious position comes a dramatic turn in the Far East. I am prepared to place this at a point in the first ten days of next month."

*Why?*

Doesn't say. Then he says: "This war will end with a sudden explosion which takes the world by surprise. And the match touching it off will be struck by July. Thereafter, no hope for Nazi aims—"

*Golly! What would happen if any politician or leader-writer said anything like that?*

He'd be thrown out for "complacency."

*But you say this stuff cheers you up?*

Yes, it does, in a way.

*But you don't believe in the personal stuff—the birthday nonsense?*

Of course not!

*Why should you believe in one part of this chap and not the other?*

Well, I didn't say I believed, exactly.

*You're an educated man. Don't you think that lots of simple people may believe in both?*

Maybe.

*Do you still think I'm wrong to go to the Home Secretary?*

No, I suppose he'll get the same as a private.

*Then what about the major-general? And the sergeant-major?*

I hadn't thought about them. I suppose they'll come down to the private's pay.

*Will that be a good idea? How will the major-general pay for his posh uniform?*

He'll have a uniform allowance. Or perhaps he'll dress like a private.

*Well, how will he pay last year's income-tax?*

Don't be tiresome. It's the Russian spirit working in us, and unless you get that—

*Do Russian major-generals get the same as Russian privates?*

I don't know.

*I doubt it.*

But haven't they got a "classless society"?

*In theory. But, in practice, I'm told, they've got quite a healthy crop of classes. Lots of chaps, I mean, get lots more money and food, and so forth, than lots of other chaps. That's class.*

Do you get more if you work more?

*Nowadays, I believe you do. It's an old-fashioned idea; but the Russians, I gather, have got hold of it at last. And the artists and authors and so on do very well. Jolly good show.*

Don't they get soldier's pay?

*Not on your life! Why should they? After all, they're the only genuine "producers." The miner doesn't "create" the coal. The farmer doesn't "create" what he sells. But the author and the inventor do. And everybody who comes in later is a mere parasite upon their brains and labour. Publishers, printers, theatrical managers—*

Oh, come, you don't mean that!

*No, of course I don't. But if you're going to use that sort of language, that's the logical conclusion of it.*

Perhaps that's why so many "intellectuals" are so potty about Russia. They see a square deal coming at last.

*Very likely. And quite right too.*

What are we arguing about?

*I forget. Oh, I know. When the civilian gets "soldier's pay," is he going to get "soldier's allowances" as well—and "soldier's board and lodging"—and "soldier's freedom from income-tax on the same? Or what?*

I don't know. I don't think that's been worked out yet.

*I'm sure it hasn't. Nowadays, if you say that the earth is flat often enough people will begin to believe you. But nobody will expect you to work it out.*

Which explains the success of the astrologers, perhaps. What would they get in Russia, I wonder?

*They'd get a bullet.* A. P. H.

### SIRENS . . .

ONE never knows where the attack will fall, but when it does it is bound to mean that more people need the immediate help of food, clothing, money, hospital treatment and the whereabouts to carry on. *Punch*, through its COMFORTS FUND, endeavours to be a good neighbour to them all.

Will you please help us in the good work? We would be so grateful if you could send a contribution, however small. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

I wouldn't say that. Only, don't forget about the Lucky Colour.

*What amuses me is that the more the papers run this Luck-stuff, the more, at the same time, they run the Equality business.*

Equality?

*"Equality of opportunity" and so on—which must mean the elimination of luck.*

I hear they're going to put everybody on soldier's pay.

*Which soldier?*

Any soldier. All the munition-workers and fire-watchers and Big Business boys are going to get the same as the soldier.

*Yes, but what sort of soldier?*

How do you mean?

*I mean, some soldiers get more than others. A major-general gets about £1,500, doesn't he? Will the munition-worker—*

## At the Pictures

## CUSTER'S LAST STAND

PEOPLE who began their film-going careers when almost every picture concerned itself with Red Indians often lament the gradual fading away of the Red Man from the films. It was perhaps a body of these elders that started a small cheer in the audience, when I saw *They Died With Their Boots On* (Director: RAOUL WALSH), at the first appearance of an Indian in that well-remembered looking-down-from-the-heights-on-the-wagon-train attitude. Certainly they had had to wait a long time for this; the film lasts over two hours, and too much of it at first deals with cadet activities at West Point. It is there that we first meet *George Armstrong Custer* (ERROL FLYNN), and his whole career, from his arrival at West Point, through his activities in the American Civil War, has to be sketched before we reach the occasion or the men signified by the title of the film. *Custer* died at the head of the heroic Seventh U.S. Cavalry in a battle with thousands of Indians at Little Big Horn. These spectacular battle-scenes are exceedingly well done, and the whole film, though too long, is interesting. I read that it is full of anachronisms; but I'm ashamed to say that I'm not competent to recognize them, and most other English people won't be, either.

*The Foreman Went to France* (Director: CHARLES FREND) I found a bit disappointing. No doubt my objections are merely personal and you should be warned that you are quite likely to enjoy the picture with no such reservations; but I can't help feeling that the script and direction might have made much better use of their material. You know the basis of fact on which the story is founded: there really was a foreman who went to France in June 1940 to bring back some "special-purpose" machines which had to be kept out of the hands of the enemy. Here he is

CLIFFORD EVANS, who gives some personal value to the character, and one can think all the time that probably just such events as these did occur . . . but the atmosphere is wrong, in my view: the atmosphere is the

had to be expressed) and a kind of forced jauntiness of mood that comes, I believe, with the too-hasty and too consciously "bright" production of something designed to give a sympathetic audience what it is expected to like. The mood of a great many British films reminds me somewhat of the tone of a cheerful young schoolmistress telling infants that this afternoon for a treat they will go on a nature ramble instead of reading about botany in the classroom. This idea is very hard to explain, and I dare not hope that very many of you understand what I mean.

After all, most of you go to the pictures with the idea of seeing people you like perform in a story that is entertaining. From this point of view *The Foreman Went to France* should be all right. Even if you are pleased by nothing else you are almost certain to laugh

at TOMMY TRINDER.

In *Reap the Wild Wind* (Director: CECIL B. DE MILLE) we have one more of those wild beautiful heroines continually scolded by the old family retainers, shocking the respectable, dazzling a number of suitors (but particularly two), being gallant and gay and unafraid and clear-eyed and all that stuff. If the story is highly-coloured and active enough, this formula seldom fails to produce a success; and here is a tale of wrecking and piracy off the American coast in the eighteen-forties that is full of spectacular incident and works up to one of the most miscellaneously violent endings we have seen for some time. PAULETTE GODDARD is the young lady, and RAY MILLAND and JOHN WAYNE are the two suitors, one of whom of course sacrifices himself at the end; RAYMOND MASSEY and ROBERT PRESTON are the villainous pirate *King Cutler* and his brother *Dan*; and the dialogue, though not distinguished, is often improved by being hoarsely yelled into the fury of a Technicolor storm. For me the kindest influence in the whole affair was LYNNE OVERMAN as a pawky old *Cap'n*. Mr. OVERMAN must have mitigated a great many films for me in his time. R. M.



[*The Foreman Went to France*]

## CIVILIAN CONTROL

*The Foreman* . . . . . CLIFFORD EVANS  
*Tommy* . . . . . TOMMY TRINDER  
*Jock* . . . . . GORDON JACKSON

dear old British-films atmosphere about which we all have our own opinion. One gets that unmistakable impression compounded of rather flat, pedestrian dialogue (the sort of thing anybody might write, once told what



[*Reap the Wild Wind*]

## WITH HOOK IN THE SOUTH SEAS

*Steve Tolliver* . . . . . RAY MILLAND

## Industrial Relations

**T**HREE is a green letter-box on the door of my office bearing the notice:

EMPLOYEES' SUGGESTIONS  
COMPLAINTS AND QUERIES

I propose to open this box in the presence of the layman reader; to prove, in my capacity as Scientific Management Consultant and Welfare and Industrial Relations Officer of the Snacker and Diplocket Small Things Co. (1928) Ltd., that production problems lie deeper than a quantitative analysis of man-hours and supply.

I select five papers at random.

The first is typical: "I am an ex-Serviceman, married, with seven children (three in the Forces). I have collected three hundredweights of paper salvage, put twenty-five quid in Savings Certs., joined the Home Guard, given up smoking and have four evacuees billeted on me. I work in 'C' Shop, making hub-cap angles for boom ladle fittings (Size 9), and I work hard. Every five minutes or so the shop manager comes up behind me, bends over my shoulder and whispers in a sinister fashion in my ear: 'There's a war on!' Is this absolutely necessary?"

The second note is somewhat cryptic. It asks: "What about the *Daily Worker*?" and is signed with a hammer and a left-handed bill-hook.

The third comes from a Mr. D. E. ("Granfer") Creppitt: "We older workers, recalled from a well-earned retirement, strongly resent the maudlin treatment which we are compelled to endure. Breaks for what passes for music are bad enough, but for a man entering his eighty-third year the suggestion of a workers' 'playtime' is humiliating and abhorrent. When I was a young man we thought nothing of a twelve-hour working day followed by four hours at night school."

"I have been employed here," states the fourth note, "for only three weeks, but quite long enough to see the shocking inefficiency on all sides. Take Shop 'B' for example. We arrive at 8 A.M. and stamp our cards with the day-before-yesterday's date (a fine way of keeping up to schedule!); we are not allowed to smoke, although it should be obvious that smoking means more taxes for the war-effort, and we spend hours and hours quarrelling about the mottoes that we chalk on guns and tanks. 'Berlin or bust' is hackneyed. We all realize the importance of new and catchy captions, but too many cooks . . . What is wanted is a specialist for the job, and you need

## ANOTHER CHANGED FACE

### DOING THE SHOPPING



1



2

look no further than your correspondent. Four times prize-winner in the *Sunday Adjudicator* 'Makaword' Contest and runner-up in a spelling bee last Christmas are my qualifications."

The last note is set in a scholarly hand. It reads: "Before taking up war work I was a missionary in the Lualaba country. The natives in these parts work long hours, filling coconuts with lead shot for English fair-grounds.

The reduction of industrial fatigue with these people presents great difficulties, since they do not appreciate the jungle rhythms of our dance orchestras. However, I found that the reading of selected passages of *Henry Esmond*, *The Compleat Angler* and *Marmion* had a soothing effect on their nerves—though I am prepared to admit that they did not understand all they heard. You may find the idea useful."



"Have we heard anything of a points scheme for money?"

### The Second Front

AM fighting on my own a lonely battle.  
Gallant, and oh, so lonely do I stand,  
Facing the thunderous batteries of Spring,  
The tarnished sword of Conscience in my hand.

They are slowly creeping up on every side,  
The blossom and the birds and the young  
grass;  
But through the bent bastion of my resolve  
I swear on England's name they shall not  
pass.

Let them bombard me with their nightingales,  
Though I may listen, yet I will not hear;  
Let them lay mines of primroses and moss,  
My feet shall tread between them without fear.

I know so well their treacherous infiltrations.  
Spring in the blood! That galvanizing urge  
To buy up every single mortal thing,  
From foolish hats to dreary lengths of serge.

Insidious and warm, the balmy air  
Bids me be lavish with my dwindling gold  
As are the buttercups, 'gainst whose suggestive  
flames  
The pumps of thrift I have avowed to hold.

The trees like frothy quislings stand bedecked,  
Whispering "Spend, and you will look like us!"  
I face the blowing of their scented guns  
With Duty as my rusty arquebus.

I shall prevail if I am brave and true;  
But oh, how glorious the opposition!  
And oh, to fight so heavenly a foe  
With such intensely boring ammunition! V. G.

### So Now We Know.

"ND where exactly are you stationed?"  
A "Oh, I'm afraid I can't tell you."  
"I quite understand. I suppose I'd better not ask what your work is?"

"I couldn't possibly tell you that. But I take a definitely wizard view of the life now I've stopped being an erk, though the A.S.O. is a bit of a bind sometimes."

"You mean you like it all?"

"What I said."

"Is it all very difficult?"

"At first I thought everything was a bit dim, but one gets the idea by degrees. Actually, it's a wizard moment when you feel you've really got everything under control and the thing's all buttoned up."

"It must be."

"You see, I've really got cracking now."

"How interesting! I've been longing for you to come on leave so that I could hear all about it."

"Actually, there was a bit of a flap about my leave. The Adj. is a definitely ropey type and at first he seemed to take a dim view of the whole idea. I thought he was going to tear a strip off me when I applied. He really is an awfully poor type. Margaret was definitely shot down in flames last time she went to see him."

"How dreadful! Who is Margaret?"

"Oh, just a blonde job."

"But what's her other name?"

"Oh, I haven't the *slightest* idea. She was terribly browned-off, though. At least, I was told all this, though I wasn't actually there at the time, but I don't think it was duff gen."

"I do hope it wasn't. I don't in the least know what duff gen is, but it sounds like a rather nasty kind of pudding."

"You couldn't be more wrong."

"I dare say not."

"Actually, duff is just the opposite of pukka. Gen is just the low-down. There are bags of expressions like that."

"I see."

"Have I told you about the W.O.?"

"No."

"Oh, he's a poor type. In fact I take a definitely low view of him. Most people do. He's practically U.S. He spends most of his time just stooging about."

"What exactly is that?"

"Oh, well, it's just stooging. What you'd expect of that sort of little twerp, you know."

"But what is it he does, exactly?"

"Just natters, and he's always shooting a line. Nobody likes him really, except one definitely ropey type called Nancy."

"Nancy?"

"Yes. She's been an awful bind ever since she got her tapes."



"Your shore-leave chit?"

"Has she?"

"Are you feeling browned-off or anything? You look as if everything was completely cheezed."

"No, no, not at all. I may have felt a little bit giddy, but nothing more."

"As if a fly was orbitting your head—I know. Well, I do hope everything will soon be under control again."

"Thank you."

"Having a forty-eight is wizard, I must say. When I actually got the gen that it was okay, honestly, you could have blown me down with a spanner." E. M. D.

### Recreational

ON Saturday afternoons our O.C.T.U. has a rest from lectures, and all we have to do is to go for a four-mile run, blance our equipment, sew on all the buttons that have come off during the week, write letters to all the people to whom we owe letters, saying we will write more fully when we get time, and catch up on our notes.

"I am going to dodge the run this afternoon," said Cadet Sympson last Saturday morning, "if I can get out of it. I may, with luck, get my work done by 9.30, which will give me a full hour for what may be called the fleshpots of Egypt—reading a book in the N.A.A.F.I. over a bottle of beer and a pipe."

"You can't get out of the run," I said; "they watch us too closely. There is sure to be an officer at the starting-point and another officer at the finishing-point, and probably officers hiding up trees all along the route to see that we don't wipe our brows on the sleeves of our gym-vests or indulge in any other behaviour unbecoming to men who are nearly officers and gentlemen."

"There is always a way," said Sympson, "and I have hit upon a good idea. Will you join me in it? It will look much better if there are two of us."

I was only too willing to avoid the run. Not that I dislike exercise, but I felt that a rest would do me more good.

"My plan," said Sympson, "is to take the wind out of Captain Bewley's sails by complaining that a four-mile run is no use to athletes like ourselves, and that we want something more in the nature of ten miles."

I asked Sympson if he had gone mad, and he explained.

"No," he said, "I have not. The idea is that if we get permission to go ten miles we shall naturally start earlier, before the spies are out, and come back later, after the spies have been withdrawn. The man who lives at the little cottage a few hundred yards outside the camp gates is a friend of mine. In his parlour we can spend a pleasant hour getting our notes up to date, instead of doing them this evening. Then we can come back, tired but cheerful, and game to the last. Can you see any flaw in the scheme?"

I could not. That is the trouble with Sympson's schemes. The flaws always appear when it is too late to withdraw from them.

We went to the O.C.T.U. office and knocked on the door. The C.S.M. showed us into the inner chamber and Captain Bewley greeted us with the air of armed neutrality which he reserves for cadets.

Sympson explained why we were there.

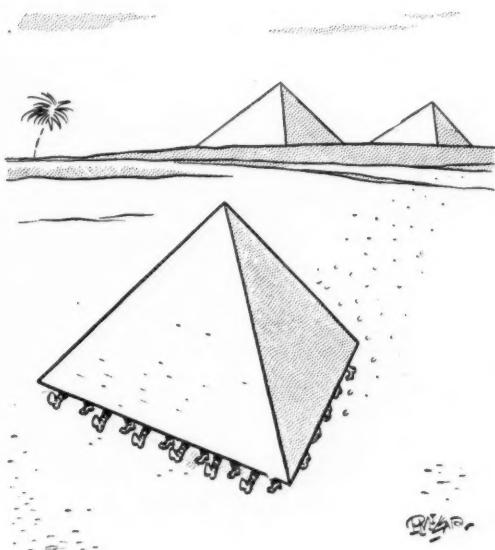
"A four-mile run," he concluded, "is probably enough for most fellows, but Conkleshill and I did a lot of running in civil life, and on a nice afternoon like this we feel that we would like to tackle something a little more ambitious. Say to Pikedale End. That would be just ten miles, there and back."

Captain Bewley beamed.

"This is most encouraging," he said. "I like to see evidences of energy in the cadets. And, as it happens, I have a note for the D.R. to take to the Vicar at Pikedale End, so you can deliver it for me and thus save petrol."

Sympson and I tossed up to decide who should take the note.

Sympson won. He always does.





*"All right, then—two packets of cigarettes."*

### *Lawn-Mower*

THAT lawn-mower, old lawn-mower,  
He is the happy hummer,  
He hums the war-thorn into hawthorn,  
And spreads the news of summer.

He hums of happier far-off things,  
Of battles long ago  
Waged on the swards of village "Lords",  
Where now potatoes grow.

He hums of tennis-courts new-mown,  
Of punts and poles and plashings,  
Of strawberry teas beneath cool trees,  
With cream and sugar (lashings).

He hums of bathes in seas that break  
Their bluest and their whitest,

Of picnic jaunts to well-loved haunts  
With one of Bevin's brightest.

He hums of book-still afternoons,  
Of hammock, home and heaven,  
Of holidays and locust ways  
And breakfast at eleven.

He hums of rose-enamoured dusks  
And hay-enchanted nights,  
Of windows wide to Thames or tide,  
Alive with friendly lights.

That lawn-mower, old lawn-mower,  
He is the happy hummer  
Of May's and June's remembered tunes  
And the green songs of summer.



SALUTE TO MALTA

## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done

**Tuesday, April 21st.**—House of Lords: Secret Session on Naval Building.

House of Commons: Hot Water from Less Coal.

**Wednesday, April 22nd.**—House of Lords: Co-ordination of Defence.

House of Commons: Budget is Discussed.

**Thursday, April 23rd.**—House of Commons: All is Silence.

**Tuesday, April 21st.**—Mr. HUGH DALTON, President of the Board of Trade, to-day introduced what witty Sir ARCHIBALD SOUTHBY called the "Scorched Fingers Policy" on the rationing of fuel.

He certainly performed the not inconsiderable feat of engendering great heat and getting himself into the hottest of hot water by advocating—less coal, gas, electricity and paraffin. Very narky the House was.

"Look here, HUGH!" it seemed to say (it may have been the "Look here, you!" of the sergeant-major, so peremptory was it)—"Look here, you can't do this to us!"

It all started so simply. Mr. LEVY having put down a question on the subject of fuel (and having failed to attend to ask it), Mr. DALTON volunteered the information that, come June, he intended to ration the means of warmth.

Just like that. It was on the recommendation of Sir WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, and . . . The Minister's voice faltered. There was a nasty ominous silence. Members fixed steely glances on the Minister, set their lips in straight firm lines, folded their arms, waited.

When Mr. DALTON had finished, the House rose. All, that is, except the Treasury Bench. It rose to launch a storm of questions the like of which human Minister has seldom braved.

And how much, pray, would all this nonsense save? Ten million tons a year, eh? A mere handful! And how many officials will be needed to operate the scheme—some, say, ten to fifteen thousand? And how will you prevent the rich from getting more than their share, the poor less? And . . . And . . . And . . .

The President, most combative of Ministers, was plainly disturbed. So were his colleagues on the Government

Front Bench. Even Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, most imperturbable of Ministers, looked surprised. Others just stared blankly—almost open-mouthed—at the Opposition, which seemed to comprise almost the entire House.

Mr. SHINWELL and Lord WINTERTON, two of the most listened-to occupants of the Opposition Front Bench, made a demand for a debate *before* the scheme is finally framed. Mr. EDEN intervened with a few gentle words which were taken as meaning that this

of other questions. The War Minister said the use of this realistic "atmosphere" was intended to train the troops for any and everything.

Whereupon Mr. NAYLOR (whose somewhat lugubrious appearance makes it impossible to tell when he is leg-pulling and when not) inquired whether the use of the lethal toys was "to get men used to being killed and wounded."

The House, in the words of the comedian, "laughed its blooming head off."

Sir JAMES GRIGG was in action again soon afterwards, and showed great courage by admitting that War Office instructions on button-polishing and such-like "had not been free of ambiguity"—but said they would be in future. Encouraged by this forthcoming attitude, Dr. RUSSELL THOMAS inquired whether "he could say how many rifles the Home Guard had."

To which Sir JAMES, with sub-machine-gun speed, retorted: "I *could*—but I *shan't*!" Loud, prolonged, and approving cheers.

On the adjournment, Mr. BERNAYS raised again the question of the dismissal of a Deputy Regional Commissioner for going to a football-match "in office time." The debate was chiefly notable for the unusual spectacle of Labour M.P.s heartily supporting Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, Home Secretary. Nothing came of the discussion.

**Wednesday, April 22nd.**—Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, sunburned and cheerful, was back in the Leadership of the Commons to-day. His contribution to the proceedings was one graceful bow to Mr. Speaker in formally (and silently) moving a small motion. But he got a good cheer even for that modest performance.

Major LLOYD GEORGE announced that the order limiting the price of restaurant meals is in preparation, and will be published soon. Mr. OLIVER LYTTELTON, Minister of Production, told of the setting up of a Panel of Experts to do (or stop) something or other. This seemed to infuriate the House, and there was a storm of supplementary questions, some few of which were relevant.

Then the House went on to a debate on the Budget which seemed to have a soporific effect on all concerned. Sir



[After "Small Coal!" in "Cries of London," published in 1688.]

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE

suggestion should have attention. So the House let the matter drop for the present.

The House evidently felt special concern for the warmth of the nation, for Major MONTAGUE LYONS was moved to inquire of the War Minister, Sir JAMES GRIGG, whether pyjamas could be issued to "other ranks" in the Army. No, said Sir JAMES, 'fraid not. Then, demanded the Major, must the soldiery sleep and work in the same shirt? Yes, said Sir JAMES, 'fraid so.

The latest method of warming up the Army—the use of live ammunition in military exercises—was the subject



*"I want a really practical Utility suit for my son."*

KINGSLEY WOOD was evidently well content that this should be so, provided always that the Members' dreams were golden ones.

The Lords were deeply moved by octogenarian Lord PORTSEA's passionate advocacy of the cause of the Channel Islanders. Lord PORTSEA is himself a Channel Islander, and he feels keenly for the unfortunate people who now live there under HITLER's rule.

Standing in a strangely hushed House, he asked the Government to send a food-ship to the starving Islanders—offered to go himself in a tiny trawler.

But, regrettably and gently, Lord SNELL had to say it could not be done, and that the Government could hold out no hope for the immediate future.

Lord PORTSEA was moved almost to tears. Struggling to his feet, he looked

around the House. In broken tones he demanded: "Will no one tell with me?" There was silence. "No one?" murmured the aged peer.

With tears in his eyes, Lord PORTSEA cried: "Then on your heads be it!"

With bowed head he went from the House.

*Thursday, April 23rd.* — "House Full" notices went up early to-day, for Mr. CHURCHILL was billed to speak on the war. He may have done so; your scribe cannot tell, for it was all in secret session.

It can be recorded that he hurried in just before the impenetrable veil

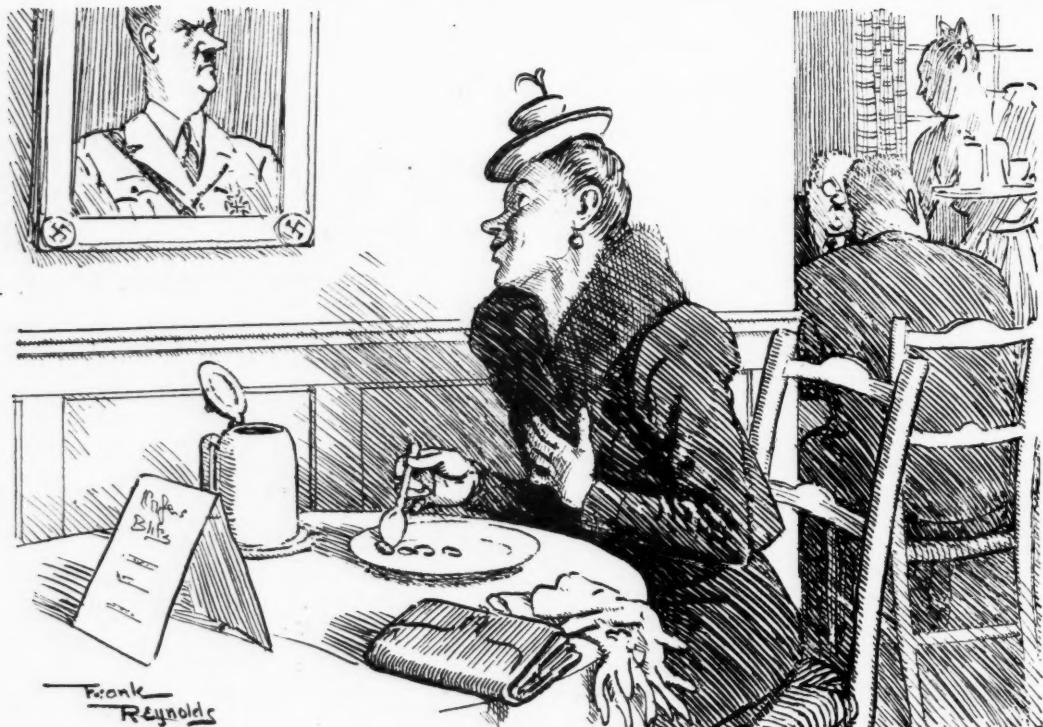
descended, and placed on the Table a wad of notes that can best be described as a parcel. He had promised a world review; he seemed to have provided for a universal review.

There was an insistent demand for a public discussion in addition, some of the Members having a queer idea that the public might be interested in its war. Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS made what might have been a promise that this should be considered.

Sir STAFFORD also announced that before any Order is made Parliament will have a chance to discuss fuel rationing. This won a hearty cheer; the House clearly does not like the scheme.

*Etymological Note* :—These words appeared on the Order Paper: pre-encashed, disinvestment. Whatever next will they get up to?

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



*"Flieger . . . Soldat . . . Matrose . . . Reichskanzler!"*

## Catching Our Connection

OF course the fun really begins in the train from town. As it approaches Hinton Junction there is a certain tension in the air. The prospective catchers get up and wait by the doors, as though even connections had their queues these days. And when the train actually draws into the station the reason for this urgent hurry is patent to all. They strain their necks and crouch in twisted attitudes in valiant attempts to see whether that elusive train is still on Platform 1 or stealing away up the branch line; and as they are on Platform 6, it really is as difficult to see as their contortions suggest.

However, their enthusiasm is nothing daunted by this restricted glimpse. They leap on to the platform and up the stairs almost at one go—and pity the simple folk who chance to block their path! Their wild career over the bridge is like a sprint in full dress; their feet thud on the wooden boards

in a united stampede and twinkle down the stairs to Platform 1.

Of course if the train is still there they tumble into the nearest carriage, one on top of the other, with gasps of relief and cool down for ten minutes until the train goes. But supposing the train isn't in, and they have arrived in the middle of one of those unaccountable gaps? Realizing that their exertions have been in vain, they stop halfway down the stairs, take the other

half at a dignified walk and transfer their energies to looking as though they really hadn't been hurrying at all, or that they know the train *ought* to be in—an effect achieved by giving worried glances at their watches, at the station clock, and up the distant line.

In the waiting-room a time-table board displays the porter's artistry in white chalk—a glorious array of A.M.S. and P.M.S., S.O.s and S.E.s. (Smudge against it at your peril, for you will transfer to your coat a whole morning's trains, in less legible form.) A careful perusal will inform you that you have a seventeen-minutes' wait till the next connection.

There are a variety of ways of spending these seventeen minutes. You can try to find a place on the two long benches down each side of the general waiting-room. The one gas-burner flares away with a vigour out of all proportion to its light, as its efforts

### PUNCH SUMMER NUMBER, 1942

will be published on May 18th, but, owing to the paper restrictions, only a limited number will be issued.

Regular readers wishing to secure a copy, who have not already placed an order with their newsagent, should do so at once.

are shrouded by a shade which reserves illumination for a favoured few, with the result that the middle of the bench is too crowded for comfort, and either side people are trying to read their papers in various stages of frustration. And the sharp ridge of the window-ledge prods your back reproachfully should you dare to lean back and relax.

If you object to the social stuffiness of the general waiting-room, then of course you can always retire in solitary gentility to the ladies' waiting-room.

Here there is no reek of smoke, no friendly chatter, but the silence 'o'f a tomb and the stale musty odour of age. The wallpaper is thickly patterned with what appear to be dark blue and green bananas; the empty fireplace gapes at you with whitened mouth, and in front of it is a tired-looking rug with the railway initials emblazoned on it (so that there is no possible chance of taking it home for the drawing-room). So you perch on the edge of a forbidding horsehair chair which exudes respectability, and contemplate the ancient poster over the fireplace, setting forth the virtues of Prestwick, where two women in impossible hats play golf eternally on a highly-coloured green.

But if you are one of the stronger sex, then you will find your retreat of gentility disgracefully sacrileged. For the door is locked, and the windows are plastered with loud bills announcing that the gentlemen's waiting-room is "To Let," and that Messrs. Snaith, Pebblesley and Snaith are the agents.

Now inevitably the question arises—what, in the name of estate agents, could you do with a gentlemen's waiting-room if you rented it? Our mind turns to those square mausoleums of glass, planted in the middle of the platform, where the local stores display their wares. You come across them unexpectedly on a dark night—a ghostly array of women staring at you with unseeing eyes and fixed smiles; and we contemplate with alarm the prospect of a corsetry display behind those discreet frosted windows—and outside, the retiring gentlemen, still exiled and unhoused.

At the first sound of an approaching train almost the entire bulk of the people in the waiting-room rises with one accord and crushes through the door. All of them, that is, except an experienced few, who sit with knowing smiles on their faces and wait for the entire bulk, having discovered that the train was on the other line, to crush back again, looking a trifle embarrassed and annoyed.

Sometimes, indeed, the train is on the Misselchurch line, in which case

you have to be unusually knowing and experienced to resist joining in the doorward stampede until you are quite sure. For the Misselchurch guard has a habit of clinging to the running-board and shouting "Not this train!" while he waves away the hopeful herd with the air of one shooing off a crowd of geese. You get the impression that the train is contaminated in some way, and that to attempt to board it would have frightful consequences.

But at last there is no shadow of doubt, for there is the elusive connection puffing to a majestic standstill before the windows. Even the smug and knowing few leave their seats under

the light (which they hastily annexed during one of the false alarms); and now the general waiting-room seems a little neglected and forlorn. But not for long. There is a distant rattling, the sound of brakes, then silence. And from Platform 6 comes the rising thunder of feet across the bridge, with hope as wings to their heels.

But already they have Lost Their Connection.

#### Conservative Estimate

"He said that accumulations of warlike stores were now ten times greater than at the war's beginning."—U.S. Paper.



"Why, Mr. Simpkins ! ! !"

## At the Play

## "FULL SWING" (PALACE)

MISS CICELY COURTNEIDGE and Mr. JACK HULBERT are here discovered rolling down to Rio, and that, naturally, is a pleasure cruise for all. For years make no difference to these two. The nimbleness of mind and limb is undiminished. Does Mr. HULBERT grow a little longer in the chin, the chin that he never fails to keep so jauntily up? When he tilts that mighty member pensively skywards, devising new nonsense, one sometimes fancies that, if he had a beard, it would brush the lips of the ladies in the dress-circle. Well, more power to his elbow and all other agile joints, and may that surprising jaw-bone never cease from discoursing its jovial asinities!

Miss COURTNEIDGE has, needless to say, a triumphant evening, being engaged in a mad masquerade and passing with her usual nonchalance, sangfroid, and tutti-tutti, from the lean, stripped elegance of a South American vampire to the sandals and draperies of a village-green folk-dancer or into the approaching elephantiasis of a secretarial aunt. Many of her craft have been notable aforetime for their magical make-up of face and figure. Miss COURTNEIDGE carries the triumphs of dissimulation from top to toe. None surely has been so dexterous in the disguise of a shapely foot and ankle. Her grotesques are given a wonderful leg-up.

But to return to the Rio outing. As in their previous Palace show, *Under Your Hat*, the HULBERTS are engaged in matters high, large, and deep. They are busy saving their country by rescuing a large blue envelope, containing a precious dossier, from a Dago doctor who combines the practice of psycho-analysis with some dabbling in murder, treason, and other minor forms of maladjustment to environment. Mr. HULBERT presents a long, smooth, smiling fellow of the kind who would certainly have known *Bertie Wooster* but is somehow clever enough to be

his own *Jeeves*. Miss COURTNEIDGE is his wife, prone to jealousy and domestic schism, and Miss NORA SWINBURNE, as a somewhat enigmatic, intrusive, and embarrassing, but infinitely decorative attachée of this couple, assists them to fill three hours with capital comedy as well as with *tourisme de luxe*.



## SUSPICIONS

Kay Porter . . . . .	MISS CICELY COURTNEIDGE
Carole Markoff . . . . .	MISS NORA SWINBURNE
Jack Millett . . . . .	MR. JACK HULBERT
Dr. Carlos . . . . .	MR. KENETH KENT

The HULBERTS' world is now the diplomatic. Our opinions of that universe are coloured by recent experience. We spend hours listening to or reading the opinions of quarters which are always well-informed, of circles which are always authoritative, and of spokesmen who hover on the verge of being official. Into this



## SECRET SERVICE

Kay Porter . . . . .	MISS CICELY COURTNEIDGE
Jack Millett . . . . .	MR. JACK HULBERT
Sebastian . . . . .	MR. GEORGE DE WARFAS

curious mixture of gas and geometry *Full Swing* goes joyfully swinging. How are we to describe Mr. HULBERT in his diplomatic dossier-hunt? Perhaps a semi-official and ill-informed, yet finally acute, angle best sums him up. Is Miss COURTNEIDGE a quarter or a circle? Perhaps she must be

put among the spokes-women as one who could put a very rough spoke in any cartwheel of conspiracy. At any rate, Downing Street is all the better for the presence of them both, and so is Shaftesbury Avenue too.

Surely musical shows, while more lightly and thriftily mounted, are far more tastefully staged than they used to be. The chorus has long ceased to be a parade of stately show-girls in lavish but ill-chosen splendour. Now all the girls must have talent as well as vitality, and they are rewarded by being cleverly dressed and given attractive backgrounds by

designers like Miss DORIS ZINKEISEN and Mr. CLIFFORD PEMBER. In dexterity of touch musical comedy has approximated to revue, which is to move in the right direction. Like so many of its age, it is all the better for losing a little weight.

Mr. KENETH KENT is a proper villain who looks colossally Cuban and not in the least Kentish, and Miss GABRIELLE BRUNE contributes efficiently to the crooner now inevitable. Miss COURTNEIDGE can even wrest her audience from hilarity to pathos, and in a whimsy little song about the matrimonial aspects of a confectionery shop she shows her astonishing command over the mood of an audience. She could tear the toughest heart by reciting "Gunga Din," if she set about it. But her chief business now is to show beyond a doubt that not the sternest and furthest rib in the auditorium is beyond the range of her ticklish humours, and supremely well does she succeed. I. B.

• •

## Moonlight in Darkest Africa

"All reports agreed that the incident had occurred in pitch darkness on a moonlight night at about 4.30 a.m. . . ."—*S. African Paper*.



*"Not much in the papers this morning."*

## Roads

**T**HREE is a road in leafy Kent  
That Roman bards have sung,  
For it was planned and it was made  
When History was young.  
From Dubris to Londinium,  
And North to Deva town,  
The Roman Legions tramped its length  
Till Rome herself went down.  
The Eagles fled; but Watling Street  
Still echoes to an Army's feet.

There is another road in Kent  
The Romans didn't see,  
For it was planned and it was made  
By Gunner Snooks and me.  
Time went to it and loving care  
And much of talk and thought,  
Till, with a Shovels, large, G.S.,  
Our monument was wrought—  
A smooth expanse, unrolled, untarred,  
Of clinker from the gas-works yard.

It starts beside the Nissen hut,  
Continues, true and straight,  
Up to the Kremlin of the site—  
The sergeant's eight-by-eight:  
Then, with a bold right-angled turn  
(Its journey scarce begun),  
Goes proudly past the Salvage Dump,  
Right to the Lewis Gun.  
It ends (abruptly, I admit)  
Over beside the Refuse Pit.

This, then, is our memorial—  
Honest, enduring, strong.  
Its cinders underneath our feet  
Crunch a triumphal song.  
And though the other fellows still  
Walk mainly on the grass,  
Snooks and myself will march on it  
Till Mars and marching pass . . .  
Unless of course some summer day  
The rain should wash the road away!

**Our Booking-Office**  
(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

**Comic Verse**

THE preface to this anthology (*The Faber Book of Comic Verse*, compiled by MICHAEL ROBERTS : FABER, 8/6) is disappointingly short. After the labour of compiling an anthology, the anthologist is apt to feel a certain reluctance to obtrude himself between his readers and their enjoyment. This diffidence may sometimes be justified, but it would have been most interesting to hear from Mr. ROBERTS, a critic of proved ability, what he thinks of his poets in particular and of the humorous element in literature in general. Some years ago GEORGE MOORE said that English fiction was ruined by its humour. This view naturally appealed to Mr. CHARLES MORGAN, who echoed it with enthusiasm; and it appears to have found some favour with Mr. ROBERTS, who at the end of his brief preface writes: "This is neither the time nor the place for a serious discussion of the joke-evil and the dangers of using comedy in the place of tragedy." If this anthology reaches a second edition perhaps Mr. ROBERTS will open out on this matter, though he may have some difficulty in justifying his inclusion of GILBERT's *Yarn of the Nancy Bell*, with its light-hearted treatment of cannibalism at sea.

Mr. ROBERTS begins his anthology with verses from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, some robust, some delightful in their simplicity, but none, strictly speaking, humorous. Humour, as we now understand it, is rare in our verse before the seventeenth century, though there are some fine examples in CHAUCER, especially in the *Nun's Priest's Tale*, and also occasionally in the *Border Ballads*, as in the concluding stanzas of *May Colvin*, when the heroine, returning early in the morning from throwing her false lover into the sea, bribes her parrot with the promise of a golden cage not to give her away to her father, who is grumbling suspiciously from his bedchamber next door. Indicating omissions is, as Mr. ROBERTS suggests in his preface, an unworthy habit in readers of anthologies. To have done with it, one misses DRYDEN's *Mac Flecknoe*, surely an example of the good-natured laughter which Mr. ROBERTS prefers to more incisive satire, and ANDREW MARVELL's *To a Coy Mistress*, the humour in which is so interfused with the poetry that even GEORGE MOORE might have approved its presence. The eighteenth century is well represented, from MATTHEW PRIOR with his:

To John I owed great obligation;  
But John unhappily thought fit  
To publish it to all the nation:  
So John and I are more than quit,

down to WILLIAM BLAKE, who belonged to his age in his epigrammatic brevity, if in nothing else:

Thy Friendship oft has made my heart to ache:  
Do be my enemy, for Friendship's sake.

With the nineteenth century English humour broke its moorings, floating away into wild seas of inspired nonsense with LEAR and LEWIS CARROLL, and uninspired turgidity with many of the lesser Victorians. The neatness and wit of the eighteenth century did not vanish altogether, but where they survived were pressed into the service of punsters and parodists. The punsters came first, with one punster of genius, THOMAS HOOD, whose puns fall so naturally from him that it would seem pedantry to have tried to avoid them:

His death, which happened in his berth,  
At forty-odd befell :

They went and told the sexton, and  
The sexton toll'd the bell.

Then came the great parodists of the middle and late Victorian times, CALVERLEY and J. K. STEPHEN, and the less well-known but equally brilliant A. C. HILTON, whose *Heathen Pass-ee*, given by Mr. ROBERTS, achieves the difficult feat of successfully parodying a poem which is itself comic. With the turn of the century the wit of the eighteenth century and the fantasy of the nineteenth blended in the verse of G. K. CHESTERTON, and operated independently of one another in HILAIRE BELLOC, who was equally at home in the invective of *Verses to a Lord* and the inspired nonsense of

Lord Hippo suffered fearful loss  
By putting money on a horse  
Which he believed, if it were pressed,  
Would run far faster than the rest.

Mr. ROBERTS brings his collection down to the present day, winding up with the somewhat doleful mirth of Mr. T. S. ELIOT's *Practical Cats*, and Mr. WILLIAM EMPSON's amusing and penetrating *Smack at Auden*. It is a long journey from the fifteenth century to Mr. AUDEN and Mr. ELIOT, and it is interesting to compare the anonymous poets quoted at the beginning and the end of this anthology. "Anon," in the fifteenth century, bawls:

Bring us in good ale, and bring us in good ale;  
For our blessed Lady sake bring us in good ale!

"Anon," in the twentieth century, murmurs:

As I was going up the stair  
I met a man who wasn't there.  
He wasn't there again to-day—  
I wish to God he'd go away.

H. K.

**Jugoslavia**

When the present Pope remarked that of all forms of private property none was more natural than the family holding, he was not so much preaching modest contentment with a low standard of living as pointing out the most impregnable citadel of human self-respect. For when you have nothing to buy but salt, sugar, coffee and paraffin, you have—unless you are cunningly undermined by urban taxation—a sporting chance of calling your soul your own. The six years of indefatigable field work which Miss OLIVE LODGE has devoted to *Peasant Life in Jugoslavia* (SEELEY, SERVICE, 21/-) has done more, therefore, than portray in its fugitive common-sense and beauty one of the last peasant cultures in Europe. (It has done this, of course, and done it with a detachment so scientific as to be almost inhuman.) But—facing East, towards Turkey rather than Austria: Greek Orthodox and Moslem rather than Catholic—it has exhibited the pattern of a possible renaissance of sound living, secured "before the West had spread its ever-encroaching blanket of ordinariness and given a machine-made outlook." As an antidote to both poisons nothing could be more exhilarating than the intimate blend of land, home and altar described in this unique book. H. P. E.

**The Shape of Better Things to Come**

Professor E. H. CARR is not the first writer to discover that we are in the middle of a revolution. He goes further than most in being able to describe quite satisfactorily—in *Conditions of Peace* (MACMILLAN, 12/6)—how we have come to be there and in having at least an idea or two as to how we may win through to the other side, probably rather the better in the long run for the devastating experience. As his

particular contribution to the new wisdom he has analysed out of their concealment in the outgrown lumber of the nineteenth century those economic fallacies which most of us have guessed to be largely responsible for a train of maladies starting with unemployment and ending in the Hitlerian attempt at world domination. Mankind, he suggests, would do well first to make up its collective mind as to what things from buns to battleships are really needed, and how much or many, afterwards setting to work to produce them, rather than to begin by piling up unlimited quantities of possibly unsaleable stuff. This system of planned production, taken for granted in war, is one of the author's grand clues to lead us out of the labyrinth, and his book is infinitely worth study for this alone.

Having established the consumer instead of the producer at the centre of economic and political power, Professor CARR is prepared to face the further problem of a Europe which will assuredly rebuild itself all awry if this country and America do not provide scaffolding and plumb-lines. He would have a European Planning Authority to effect an almost imperceptible change-over from military policing to inter-state co-operation, avoiding the principal mistakes of 1919 by allowing the solutions to the toughest questions to crystallize out only over a period of years. Finally he calls for a sense of purpose strong enough to carry our present burst of defensive energy beyond the first dangerous months after HITLER goes down and enduring enough to effect that permanent world settlement that is becoming attainable. Once more the author has bidden us remember 'there is something worth while beyond all this.'

C. C. P.

#### The Englishman at Home

On the admirable suggestion of the late HUGH WALPOLE, Mr. L. A. G. STRONG was asked to compile, from the novelists of the period, an anthology of *English Domestic Life During the Last Two Hundred Years* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 7/6). Seeking wealth of detail rather than literary finish, and any normal aspect of English home life as his rightful prey, he got going with his enviable task; and, "comfort and stability" being proper to homes, soon discovered that the middle-class element predominated. From an undutiful daughter (by RICHARDSON) one passes through Georgians to Victorians, the obvious transition-piece being the immortal party where *Jorrocks* refuses mince on the ground that "I likes to chew my own meat." The Victorians, richer by rare recruits like EMILY EDEN, unaccountably omit Mrs. HENRY WOOD and WILKIE



Bluejacket (in charge of Party of Sightseers). "HERE NELSON FELL."  
Old lady. "AN' I DON'T WONDER AT IT, POOR DEAR. NASTY SLIPPERY PLACE!  
I NEARLY FELL THERE MYSELF!"

L. Raven-Hill, May 3rd, 1899

COLLINS; and "comfort and stability" having reached a rather hideous apex with GOLSWORTHY and BENNETT, we slither rapidly downhill to Mr. NORMAN COLLINS's bitter picture of peasant incomes enjoying mechanized luxury under the Damoclean sword of the hire-purchase system. Few regrets will temper appreciation of this delightful and timely book.

H. P. E.

## Dorcas is Willing.

A Dig-for-Victory Story

WHEN Dorcas reached the summit of the hill she was out of breath. Headless of gorse and thistle she threw herself to the good earth. For almost a year now she had kept her daily tryst on Fleabane Hill. This was her hour of telepathic communion with her Uncle Jethro. Dorcas let her calloused but sensitive fingers play among the virile grasses. They found the dandelion they were seeking and with a masterly twist severed the stem from its root. Then, pensively and anachronistically, she blew away the gossamer seed-threads and whispered "One o'clock, two o'clock . . ." She reached ten, added two for Double Summer Time and made a mental calculation. "Only another hour before the news," she said. Then she stood erect and let her eyes traverse the wide marches of Fleabane Farm.

Away to the left as far as Meridian 1° 35' West the beasts fed on the rich pastures of the Keuper Marls. In the syncline the fine limestones of the Oolite scarp reflected the dazzling sunlight. Here were fine crops of alfalfa, lucerne, rotweed, esparto grass and axlethorn. The good earth paid good dividends on its cumulative preference shares.

Dorcas smiled. Yes, she had succeeded. She had proved that Fleabane could be handled by a woman—the right woman. She could hold her head high. There would be no humiliating procrastination, no tearful

apologies when that old tout Ricardo called for his extortionate rent. He would be paid promptly from the sheaf of notes in the tea-caddy. Uncle Jethro, presiding over one of the interminable meetings of the War Allotments (Mulching Dept.) Committee, would be proud of his deputy. Dorcas smiled again. This was a woman who enjoyed power—power over the earth and power over her fellow men. Far below in the tectonic trough where lay the spotless farm buildings, the land-girls moved resolutely at their tasks. They moved in the shadow of the mistress of Fleabane.

Suddenly the smile was gone only to be replaced by a massive frown. The piercing blue eyes beneath their crenellated brows could spot a barley weevil or a green tick at two hundred yards. Now they saw figures moving in the long alfalfa grasses. Dorcas hitched her slacks and ran pell-mell down Fleabane Hill. Taking a black-thorn hedge and ditch in an easy leap, she surprised and confronted two uniformed trespassers.

"Heil Hitler!" they said raising their right arms automatically.

"Heil nothing!" said Dorcas, going methodically through their pockets. "Come on; speak up. What are you up to? Can you work a four-horse-team binder?"

Ulsa, the less Aryan of the two Germans, looked inquiringly at his friend Wart and answered in Gothic type.

"Cut it out," said Dorcas, "it's banned: your own Fuehrer's orders."

Like the good earth and the beefy beasts, the *Luftwaffe* pilots succumbed

to the powerful pressure of this woman. They were engaged as land-girls. Dorcas knew that her risk was great, but her agricultural ambitions were limitless. She would keep these men until the rotweed was safely garnered and transmuted into crinkly cash. There were difficulties of course. Ulsa and Wart must be prevented from betraying her by their involuntary salutes. To this end she deprived them of their braces for a few weeks. Her methods of inducing them to work were cunning. With Ulsa, a Bavarian, she used bribery. She promised him a handsome reward—her Ford Eight—and explained to him carefully that it was a more efficient and more tangible offering than the People's Car. With Wart, a Prussian, she relied on martinet discipline. He seemed happy to be excused from taking thought and worked gratefully.

The cattle grew fat and increased their milk yield four-fold. The crops multiplied and grew exceeding tall. But Dorcas was not yet satisfied. If two extra hands could do so much, what could she not do with more? Within three months she had captured fifty-seven more members of the *Luftwaffe*. She spent her days on Fleabane Hill sweeping the skies with her binoculars. Her Ford was ready and waiting. She was always on the scene fifteen minutes before the military authorities.

Soon her prodigious output of food-stuffs earned her public recognition. She was awarded high honours. But in the end her obsession caused her downfall. After the Battle of Britain the countryside became comparatively free of fallen Germans.

All the world knows the rest of the story. Bitterly disappointed by the failure of her labour supplies, Dorcas conspired to drain the prisoners-of-war camps of their internees. Her machinations involved the whole country in a succession of man-hunts. She became the controlling figure in a vast system of intrigue and espionage. Prisoners escaped and vanished, apparently into thin air. Meanwhile the land-girls of Fleabane became more and more numerous.

There can be no doubt that Dorcas acted from the highest patriotic motives, but the fact remains that she was guilty of technical offences against the Crown. When at long last her duplicity was unmasked Fleabane had been expanded to almost two million acres.

But for that last mad mistake her crimes would almost certainly have remained undetected. It was pure folly to raid Dartmoor.



"Where did you last see the soap?"



### *The New Technique*

**H**AIR'S a bit thick, sir," remarked the barber, snapping his scissors menacingly beneath the lobe of my left ear.

Blowing a bunch of snipped hairs out of the corner of my mouth I replied sadly: "It's a good deal thinner than it was before the war."

The barber raked my scalp vigorously with his comb and inspected the damage.

"Thin, sir? Oh, no, I wouldn't call that thin. Not by any means. It's not healthy, like, for hair to be too bushy at the crown."

"As a matter of fact," I said, "I was thinking of trying some hair restorer. Can you recommend a good one?"

He combed my front hair well over my eyes to prevent my seeing what he

was up to, and then proceeded to cut carefully along the dotted line.

"Hair restorer? I wouldn't use any of that if I was you, sir. It clogs the pores of the scalp, as you might say, and prevents the natural growth of the hair. If you'll take my advice, sir, you'll give that kind of stuff a miss. Just massage the scalp yourself, night and morning. There's nothing like it, you can take it from me."

I felt I could safely take it from him. He was almost bald, so he ought to know.

He lifted the hair out of my eyes and held the mirror up to nature at the back of my neck.

"I think you'll find that's just right, sir."

"Splendid, thanks," I lied. "Would you advise a shampoo?"

He flipped at my neck with a long brush, sending a shower of loose particles of hair down my back.

"Frankly, sir, I wouldn't. Shampoos destroy the follicles at the root of the hair, in a manner of speaking, causing it to fall out more readily. That's my own experience, sir, and I shouldn't be surprised if any doctor wouldn't tell you the same."

I thanked him, and gave him a substantial tip. He was the frankest barber I had ever met.

Or nearly the frankest. As I left, the man in the other chair asked very humbly for some hair cream.

The other barber gave a hollow laugh.

"Hair cream, sir? You'll be lucky! We haven't had a darn thing in the shop for a fortnight."

## Chinese Crackers

IT came into the mess last Christmas. One of the brigade majors said it was by Blood Alley out of Halma, but he is the kind of man who makes that kind of joke, and he was ignored. We had borrowed it from the Americans with the intention of providing a nice quiet game for the elders at our Christmas party, and indeed it served its purpose, for it detained the matron of the General Hospital for at least an hour after she had threatened to take her brood away. But after that it languished.

Until it was discovered by Major Malplaquet. In appearance the game resembles Halma, but played with differently coloured marbles instead of with the small pieces of wood that were part of the nursery game and which were invariably chewed up by the puppy or rolled under the heaviest book-case by the kitten. Major Malplaquet, who is mathematically-minded, was discovered one evening working out the minimum number of moves necessary to transfer all his own men from his own base to that opposite, without of course any opposition. In the absence of any authoritative par it was impossible to persuade him that his score could not be improved upon, and there the matter might have rested—an individual idiosyncrasy common in most messes, had not Major Flodden pointed out that it was very poor training for

him to attempt a complicated move of that kind without allowing for some enemy interference. That he was prepared to provide, and proceeded to beat Major Malplaquet hands down. After that the game was truly launched, for Major Flodden, despite later failures, was convinced that he had mastered the game, while Major Malplaquet, who occasionally won, was convinced that he would.

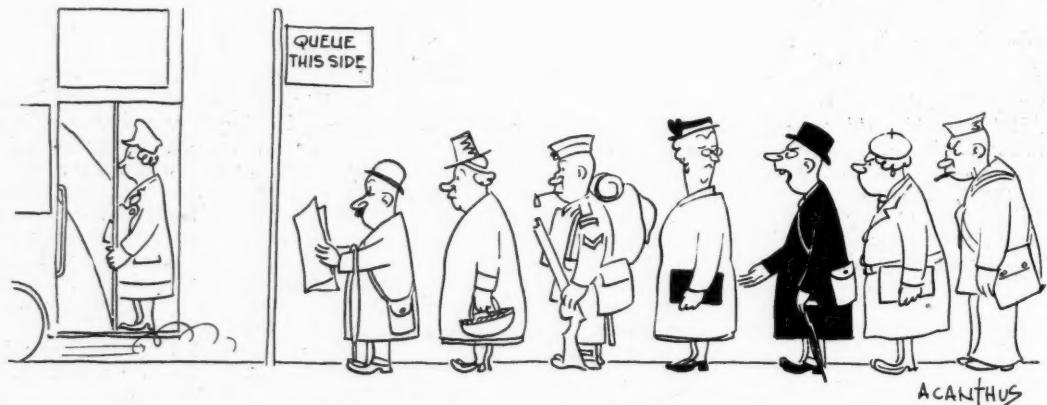
The game soon dominated the mess. Unfortunately it permits of six persons playing at once. In that state it may last for upwards of an hour, the centre of the board resembling a surrealist mosaic or Piccadilly Circus in the old days when the traffic-lights failed. Most of the junior majors soon dropped out, for, as they explained, they had urgent business in the evenings. The captains had equally urgent business, but rank is rank and there were still colonels waiting to be taught. It was the cipher officer who introduced the first innovation, which was that the first move should be in the nature of a *bisque*, the ball being lightly tossed on to the board with the eyes shut and left to roll where it listed. If it did not settle in a hole it was returned to its base. The final and most disastrous emendation came from one of the staff officers, third grade, who insisted that much greater realism could be achieved if road blocks, anti-tank obstacles and contaminated areas were introduced into the central arena. That culminated in an ugly scene in which a visiting colonel drove smartly over an anti-personnel mine and claimed that his

marbles were much too heavily armoured to be affected. Unfortunately there was a brigadier playing against him.

Perhaps if one of the Engineers had not introduced a monetary element into the game it might have expired there and then. Unfortunately his genius (in civil life he is managing director of a housing company and has nothing to learn in the provision of financial inducements which benefit the donor rather than the donee) devised a scheme by which those finishing after the winner paid him one coin for each further move they required to complete their own course across the board. Cards became a thing of the past; darts were used for pins on the notice board; even the bar profits went down: In fact it is difficult to see how the mess would have escaped complete disintegration if the general had not asked an American morale officer to dinner.

"Say, General," he said, when he entered the mess, "so this is where that set has gotten itself hidden. Why, only yesterday our Commanding General said to me 'Colonel, have we handed over to the Children's Hospital all those Chinese chequer games we corralled by mistake? The Red Cross folks have been out gunning after me for that one missing set.'" He chuckled. "The kiddies are real crazy on the game."

We handed over the set with as much dignity as possible. It is probably now in a mental deficient's ward. If not, it soon will be.



"Blow these queues—that was my bus."

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